

NEW Directions

May 3, 2007

Stewardship in Action

Learning Opportunities

Aim to Bring Stewardship to Life

*The Stewardship
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Bringing stewardship to life will require a shift in culture at the ministry, said Margaret Hart, Manager, Organizational Development and Change Strategies in the Human Resources Branch of the Corporate and Direct Services Division.

To promote this shift, the ministry is launching a Stewardship Awareness Program as part of the larger ***Stewardship in Action*** learning initiative. This key program will kick off on May 18, with a series of workshops aimed at giving staff across the ministry a greater appreciation of what stewardship entails and how it will play out in their day-to-day work.

"This program is an opportunity for staff to gain a better understanding of stewardship concepts and how work in the ministry will change," Hart said.

She said the objectives of the Stewardship Awareness workshops are to provide staff with an opportunity to:

- Gain a greater understanding of what stewardship means to the MOHLTC
- Get involved in thinking about and beginning to define the future of the ministry
- Begin to prepare personally for the shifts stewardship will require of all of us.

The interactive workshops will consider questions like, "What is stewardship?", "How will a stewardship focus change the way we work?" and "What do we need to learn?"

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The Stewardship Awareness workshops, which are open to all staff, will be delivered in two formats. Individual staff from anywhere in the ministry will be able to sign up for half-day open sessions. These sessions will be limited to about 25 people.

Managers can also request that a workshop be planned and organized for their work team or unit so that the session can be delivered to a group of colleagues who work together on a daily basis.

"You can come as an individual or your manager can set up a session for your work unit. Either way, we want to encourage as many people as possible to participate," said Holly Goren Laskin, an organizational development consultant leading staff learning and development.

Hands-On Stewardship Workshops

Workshop participants will have an opportunity to share ideas and views with colleagues. The program content will focus on key stewardship concepts — not only what stewardship requires but how we will need to change the way we work together to make it happen.

Don't come expecting a simple how-to-guide to achieve stewardship, Goren Laskin pointed out. "All staff need to become actively involved in shaping the ministry's new stewardship role," she emphasized. "The key elements of stewardship must be discussed, shared and understood by staff to begin to fully consider the needs and requirements of the ministry and their own teams," Goren Laskin said.

Facilitator Larry Chester, who has conducted other learning programs for the ministry, will lead the sessions. Chester, who teaches part time at the University of Toronto, has worked for many years with another large organization to implement a stewardship approach and to provide learning programs in support of stewardship.

At the March 7 *Stewardship in Action* Leadership Conference, Deputy Minister Ron Sapsford told senior managers: "Stewardship will now require a huge change

for all of us in the ministry; a change in behaviour — in who we talk to, in what we talk about, and in how we spend time in our workday."

Through the Stewardship Awareness Program sessions, staff can begin to explore the nature of these changes and what they will mean, Goren Laskin said.

"How will it change the way we work with our partners outside the ministry?", "How will it change the way we work with colleagues inside?", "How will it change the work itself?" These are the kinds of questions that have been on the minds of staff during the transition, Goren Laskin said. "The sessions are an opportunity to explore these issues."

The first eight Stewardship Awareness Program sessions have been scheduled throughout May and June. More open sessions will be added throughout the summer and into the fall based on interest and demand. Managers will also be able to schedule intact Stewardship Awareness sessions for their team or unit throughout the spring, summer and fall.

Many of the open workshops will be held in the Macdonald Block at Queen's Park, and sessions are also scheduled in Toronto at 5700 Yonge St. and in Kingston. Intact team sessions and additional open sessions will be set up at locations where there is a demand, as long as there is a reasonable number of staff interested in attending.

A new Learning and Development section is being launched on INFOweb today to provide staff with greater access to information on learning opportunities and resource tools. The new section, found on INFOweb under A New Direction, offers information on career management, team effectiveness, bringing stewardship to life and developing stewardship competencies. You can access these materials by visiting <http://intra.moh.gov.on.ca/stewardshipinaction>.

The materials in the new section have been arranged in categories targeted to staff, developing managers or senior managers. Staff can find links to workshops

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and training opportunities as well as other guides and tools and registration information for the Stewardship Awareness Program sessions.

Managers to Initiate Stewardship Conversations

At the same time that the staff awareness sessions begin, the ministry's senior managers will be given a comprehensive tool kit to assist them in their team and individual discussions on stewardship. This is the latest in a series of supports and training to senior managers that will equip them to better champion stewardship.

The *Manager's Kit For Facilitating Stewardship Conversations With Your Team* will provide senior managers with tools to enhance their conversations with staff to create a greater understanding of the ministry's cultural shift to stewardship. Over the coming weeks and months, managers will start discussions with their teams to reinforce the principles of stewardship and to encourage staff to take ownership and make a commitment to the ministry's new role. Managers and staff together will explore a new way of working.

As a follow up to the Stewardship Awareness Program, a Stewardship Alignment Program will be rolled out. Once work teams, units or divisions have gone through the awareness program, they will be provided with support to examine in greater detail how their specific work needs to be adapted and aligned with a stewardship approach. "It's moving from awareness and understanding to detailed application of stewardship," Goren Laskin said.

Awareness and alignment programs will be offered concurrently because different areas of the ministry are at different stages in their transition. For instance, the recently created and re-scoped branches of the ministry will have a more immediate requirement for the stewardship alignment program, while other branches

and divisions need first to gain a greater awareness of what stewardship involves and changes that may be in store.

The overall aim of the *Stewardship in Action* initiative is to create dynamic and continuous learning experiences for both staff and senior managers. These will

help shape and create momentum in the evolution to a stewardship model. Hart pointed out that the programs being offered are just some of the learning opportunities available to staff seeking to gain greater competency around stewardship. She encouraged staff to explore other learning programs offered by the ministry, as well as elsewhere in the Ontario Public Service.

Ministry programs, for example, that help develop critical thinking, project management and negotiating and influencing skills, can provide staff with the knowledge and skills necessary to assume a stewardship role. For more specifics on these learning opportunities, visit the Human Resource Branch's new Learning and Development section on INFOweb under A New Direction at intra.moh.gov.on.ca/stewardshipinaction.

For opportunities available to all OPS staff, log on to **My OPS**, click on All Services, and choose the Centre of Leadership and Learning section.

Stewardship means taking ownership of one's actions, instead of simply waiting to be told what to do. Hart said she would

encourage all staff to sign up for learning opportunities that will contribute to and support the ministry in its new role. To make this happen, managers need to support their staff in ensuring the necessary time is given to participate. "The supports are being put in place. Staff — with the support of their managers — need to take personal accountability and ownership for their learning," Hart emphasized. "Everyone needs to be engaged to bring stewardship to life." ■

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Leadership Development

on Stewardship Continues

Earlier this year, Debbie Fischer, Assistant Deputy Minister, Transition, announced the launch of the *Stewardship in Action* Leadership Program. The program is available to senior managers to support them as they take on the leadership role as champions of a stewardship culture within the ministry.

The *Stewardship in Action* Leadership Conference on March 7 kicked off the program. At that time Fischer explained that the leadership program was a partnership between the ministry and the Schulich School of Business at York University. Together, MOHLTC and Schulich will design, develop and deliver the leadership program over the next 18 to 24 months.

The program consists of four leadership modules, 24 action learning sessions and two conferences.

Senior managers will begin the first of four leadership modules in June.

About 225 managers are expected to participate, said Kathleen McDonald, project lead for the leadership program, in the Human Resources Branch of the Corporate and Direct Services Division. The participants will be divided into learning groups of about 55 which will complete the leadership modules together.

The action learning component of the leadership program will involve small teams of senior managers tackling strategic initiatives within the ministry. "This will create learning

opportunities using real ministry issues and scenarios," said Margaret Hart, Manager of Organizational Development and Change Strategies in the Human Resources Branch.

In the upcoming months, there will be two additional conferences that will build and expand on the stewardship concepts introduced at the March conference.

A *Stewardship in Action* Leadership Advisory Committee has been set up to advise on the design of the leadership programs. The committee, which includes senior managers from each division, will help keep the leadership learning on course, McDonald said.

The leadership program's overall design is aligned with the MOHLTC's stewardship competencies, which are critical in advancing the cultural change underway in the ministry. These competencies include leadership, strategic thinking, relationship management, systems thinking, results orientation, innovation, and creativity.

Hart pointed out that the resources being invested to develop leaders are significant. "This support will ensure that the ministry's senior management has the knowledge and tools to lead their staff successfully through the transition," she said. She added that an excellent opportunity for managers to support their staff, is for them to host a Stewardship Awareness workshop for their team or to encourage staff attendance at an open session, both of which roll out later in May. ■